

oil-wells resulted in the contamination of many migrant birds, including hirundines, while they were flying, moving about in vegetation, or feeding and resting in water. Affected birds had plumage discoloured by soot, including the underwings; the plumage was sometimes slightly tacky to the touch, possibly resulting from micro-particles of unburned or incompletely burned oil raised into the atmosphere with the smoke. An explanation for the occurrence of the dark birds in Siberia must remain within the realms of supposition at the present time. Further observations from this area are perhaps unlikely, but data from elsewhere might help to elucidate the matter.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Mark Van Beirs for his help in Siberia, and Michael Evans of ICBP for discussion and for kindly permitting me to refer to his draft paper on the effects of the Gulf War on birds.

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A new subspecies of *Cisticola bulliens* from northern Angola

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Received 10 May 1991

Lynes (1930) originally described the Bubbling Cisticola *Cisticola bulliens*, from a Type collected at Lobito, on the coast of Benguela Province in southern Angola. The species occurs throughout western Angola, north to Cabinda. Lynes studied the long series of specimens in the British Museum (Natural History) (BMNH) and noted that geographical variation was "very slight: not considered racially divisible." However, separation of the BMNH series according to locality shows the existence of two distinguishable populations; the birds from Benguela Province (including the type locality) are lighter in colour than northern birds. Therefore, I propose to name the latter

Cisticola bulliens septentrionalis subsp. nov.

Holotype. BMNH no. 1910.5.6.750, adult male in non-breeding plumage, collected at Ndala Tando (9°13'S, 14°56'E), Angola, on 14 August 1908 by Dr W.J. Ansorge (collector's no. 428).

Diagnosis. The new race differs from the respective plumages of the nominate in the head top (forehead to nape) being a richer, darker brown, less yellow-tinged. This difference is most noticeable in non-breeding (fresh) plumage, but is also evident in worn, breeding dress. In non-breeding dress, the rest of the upperparts are darker, browner, less grey than in the nominate, the centres of the feathers of the back being a darker sepia and the borders a richer brown. This difference virtually disappears in worn, breeding plumage.

Measurements of the type (mm). Wing 68, tail 65, bill 17, tarsus 24.

Measurements of the subspecies. Male: wing ($n=14$) 61–68 (mean 64.6); tail (breeding, $n=8$) 53–58 (55.0), (non-breeding, $n=6$) 57–65 (60.8); bill ($n=14$) 16–18 (16.8); tarsus ($n=13$) 24–27 (24.5). Female: wing ($n=5$) 51–56 (54.2); tail (breeding, $n=3$) 43–50 (46.0), (non-breeding, $n=2$) 52, 57; bill ($n=5$) 14–15 (14.8); tarsus ($n=5$) 21–22 (21.6).

Distribution. *C. b. septentrionalis* is known to occur in northern Angola, from Cabinda through intervening coastal Zaïre, south to about Gabela (11°S). It does not appear to intergrade with the nominate race south of Gabela.

Specimens examined. *C. b. septentrionalis*: paratypes include the following specimens in the BMNH. Non-breeding males: Ndala Tando 1910.5.6.751, 753, 755–759, 810–812 (collected July–December 1908); Dondo, Angola 1910.5.6.760–762 (July 1908); R. Cuvo (10°47'S, 14°20'E) 1957.35.395 (19 September 1957); Lândana, Cabinda 95.5.1.1180 (August 1883). Breeding males: lower R. Cuanza valley (9–10°S, 14–15°E) 1931.12.21.509–514 (March 1931); Quiculungo (Cuanza Norte Province, Angola) 1940.12.2.60 (March 1939); Ambrizete (north Angola) 1931.12.21.515 (17 April 1931); Lândana 89.3.27.45, 95.5.1.1178 (February and March 1883). Non-breeding females: Ndala Tando 1910.5.6.800, 801 (13 August and 6 November 1908); Dondo 1910.5.6.802 (12 July 1908). Breeding females: lower R. Cuanza valley (near Dondo) 1931.12.21.510 (12 March 1931); Ambrizete 1931.12.21.516 (7 April 1931); 11 miles west of Matadi, left bank of R. Congo 1931.12.21.517 (11 April 1931). Nine unsexed or doubtfully-sexed adult skins and four probable immatures in the BMNH were also examined. *C. b. bulliens*: five non-breeding males, six breeding males, five non-breeding females and six breeding females, all from Benguela Province, collected in July and August (non-breeding birds) and January–March (breeding), all in the BMNH.

Acknowledgements

I thank the staff of the British Museum at Tring for access to specimens in their care, and Hilary Tye who confirmed that the differences between the two races were real, by correctly placing several anonymous skins.

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